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THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : (a) & (b) The transfer was made for administrative reasons.

SRI K. P. GOPALAN : May I know whether the transfer was made at the request of the Secretary, Pudukottai Congress Committee?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I should say 'No', Sir.

SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Are Government aware that in the work of the officers of the National Development Works, the ruling party as well as Congress Committee are exercising much influence and will Government be pleased to see all parties co-operate in the work of the N.E.S. and National Development and no one political party has a dominating influence on the works themselves and the work of the officers also?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I do not think that any political party as such has any particular influence with the work or the staff. But those who work the schemes and who co-operate will necessarily have some influence with the organisation.

SRI M. DHARMALINGAM : Are Government aware of the fact that there is inordinate delay, disturbance and handicap in the successful implementation of the N.E.S. Community Development Scheme and Local Development works because of frequent transfers of officers and will the Government be kind enough to consider the necessity of avoiding such frequent transfers merely on the representation of other people who are influential in the locality?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Transfers are never made frequently and transfers are not made on the representations of any political party or any individual. But transfers are made only when it is found that the particular officer had not turned out any work or when other serious complaints are found against such officers.

SRI S. DAIVASIGAMONEY : Sir, with reference to the second part of the main question, I would like to know whether in fact any request from the Secretary, Pudukottai Congress Committee, was made for the transfer of this officer?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : If I remember aright, I do not think, I have got any such request from the Secretary, Pudukottai Congress Committee, or any other Party. But there were complaints about the work turned out in that block; I have myself heard complaints that no work was turned out in the Block.

Rural water-supply wells

* 3406 *Q.*—SRI N. PARAMASIVA UDAYAR : Will the Hon the Minister for Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether the public have to contribute 25 per cent of the cost of construction of Rural Water-supply Wells;

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(b) whether any classes of people are exempted from paying this contribution; and

(c) if so, which classes have been so exempted?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY : (a) & (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Harijans and other poor and backward people.

SRI M. DHARMALINGAM : May I know from the Hon. Minister whether the Collectors of districts have been empowered to use their discretion in fixing the percentage of contributions to be met by the public or is it compulsory on the part of the public to offer 25 per cent contribution even under Rural Water-supply Schemes?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY : So far as the Comprehensive Rural Water-supply Scheme is concerned, the beneficiaries should contribute 25 per cent for Rural Water-supply; for works under the National Water-supply Schemes and Local Development Works programme, the share of contribution from beneficiaries has not been definitely fixed.

SRI K. R. VISWANATHAN : May I know who are the backward classes that are eligible for this exemption?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY : There is a list of backward classes approved by the Government, Sir.

SRI M. JAGANNATHAN : Am I to understand, Sir, that Harijans and backward class people are given total exemption in the matter of payment of contributions?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY : Yes, Sir.

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM : Sir, in the case of water-supply to Harijan quarters, the entire work is entrusted to the District Welfare Officers who have to cater to the needs of the cheris in the district. Therefore, will Government consider the possibility of bringing this Local Development work also under the Harijan Welfare work and see that this contribution of 25 per cent is waived as a special case in the case of Harijans?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY : That is a matter for consideration by my Hon. Colleague who is in charge of that department.

SRI S. SWAYAMPRAKASAM : Even though it has been repeatedly assured by the Government that backward classes are exempted from paying any contribution, the officers who are responsible for the construction of such wells do not particularly devote so much attention to execute the works so far as Harijans and particularly the backward classes are concerned. Will the Government come forward to issue a circular to the officers concerned drawing their attention to this and instructing them to execute the works particularly where Harijans and backward classes are concerned?

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THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY : No such report has come to the Government. If specific instances are quoted, it will be looked into.

SRI K. VINAYAKAM : Sir, what is the exact connotation of the phrase ' backward class people '—does it mean economically backward or economically poor or otherwise? For, from experience we have found in Chingleput, the Collector has not exempted any backward class from payment of this contribution of 25 per cent. All villages which asked for this sinking of wells have been made to pay, even though they happen to be backward. What is the attitude of the Government in regard to this?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY : I suppose ' backward classes ' are people who are educationally backward. So far as the instances mentioned by the hon. Member are concerned, he may kindly give me full information.

Highways Workers, South Malabar

* 3407 *Q.*—SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state— 9-30 a.m.

(*a*) whether the Government have received a memorandum recently from Sri Mariappan, Secretary, South Malabar Range of the Highways Workers' Union, requesting them to increase the salary, dearness allowance, etc., of the workers of the Highways Department; and

(*b*) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The matter is under consideration.

SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Sir, are the Government aware that after the workers sent the memorandum to the Hon. Ministers as well as to the Government there has been victimisation and dismissal of workers not only in South Malabar but in many other places in Malabar district? Will the Government be pleased to make an enquiry into the matter and see that no victimisation takes place on account of the normal trade union activities

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI : Sir, I have no knowledge of the allegations made by the hon. Member. If he gives me details about the incident in writing, I shall have it enquired into.

Transport Advisory Boards

* 3408 *Q*—SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments and Transport be pleased to state whether the Government have decided to constitute Transport Advisory Boards in all districts in the State?